

MEXICAN WOLF BLUE RANGE REINTRODUCTION PROJECT

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT WORK GROUP

FINAL SUMMARY NOTES FOR PUBLIC MEETING ON OCTOBER 29, 2008

Location: Glenwood Elementary School, 1 Schoolhouse Road, ¼ mi north of Glenwood NM on the west side of U.S. Highway 180
Time: NM Time: 1600 – 1930
Host: New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
Participants: Various representatives from the following Adaptive Management Oversight Committee (AMOC) Lead Agencies: Arizona Game and Fish Department, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, U.S. Forest Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and approximately 23 individuals from the public. No AMOC Signatory Cooperator Agencies attended.

1. Welcome, introductions, ground rules, and agenda review. Matt Wunder (NMDGF) convened the meeting at 1600 NM Time. Attendees were welcomed; introductions were made; ground rules were explained; and the agenda was reviewed.
2. Interagency Field Team items. The IFT provided a written report addressing the issues below for the period between the July and October 2008 AMWG meetings. That report is posted on the Project Web site, at <http://azgfd.gov/wolf>, and will not be repeated in this summary.
 - a. Field Team staffing
 - b. Status of the wild population
 - c. Depredation and nuisance responses in 3rd quarter 2008
 - d. Outreach activities in 3rd quarter 2008
 - e. Loan of radio-telemetry equipment
 - f. Initial releases and translocations approved for Nov 2008 – dec 2009
 - g. Other field activities

Questions and comments from the public:

1. Why can't Jess Carey get the channels for all the wolves currently in New Mexico?
 2. Why won't AMOC recognize Jess Carey and Catron County as managing entities for the wolf project?
3. Miscellaneous AMOC updates
 - a. Renewal of the 2003 Project MOU
 - b. Arizona Game and Fish Commission guidance to AGFD.

Questions and comments from the public:

1. Will the recovery plan need to be updated?
2. Will recovery criteria need to be developed to be able to delist the Mexican wolf?
3. What is the purpose of Commission directive number 9 (modification of SOPs to assist in reintroduction efforts, etc.)?

4. Why is WMAT treated differently than Catron County regarding project activities, etc.?
5. General concern regarding threats to people and private property from wolves and the project overall.
6. Opposition to nuisance wolf behavior around Reserve was expressed.

c. Status of SOP clarifications and revisions

Questions and comments from the public:

1. Why is Dr. Tuggle involved in the initial release and translocation planning process?
2. Why has the "Interdiction, Incentives, and Compensation Program" not been funded?
3. Should not the compensation plan be in place before you release any more wolves?
4. Project costs are too high and you are not able to compensate ranchers for livestock losses.
5. Naïve wildlife is at risk from these wolves.
6. Concerned about loss of game species due to wolf impacts.
7. Concerned about bighorn sheep surveys and associated helicopter harassment of cattle on private land.

Action Items:

John Oakleaf (USFWS) will forward questions and concerns 1-6 to Dr. Tuggle.
Matt Wunder (NMDGF) will forward concern 7 to NMDGF.

d. NEPA scoping process for reconsidering the 10(j) rule

Questions and comments from the public:

1. Why are you planning an Environmental Assessment revision?
2. Why can AMOC change definitions regarding the project and yet USFWS needs to undertake an EA to redo definitions in the 10j rule, etc.?

e. Open discussion of timing and format of AMWG meetings

Questions and comments from the public:

1. Most people won't attend these meetings because their opinions are ignored. No matter what is said it is ignored. People have lost trust in the project.
2. Ten years of impacts have only shown that the project is not working and it has not been made better.
3. Use videoconferencing or online services to increase public accessibility to the project. Involve the agency Directors at these meetings as well.
4. When the wolf reintroduction process began, AMOC included information in a newspaper article that indicated Catron County supported the project. They misrepresented my statements and that is why I left the process. Hugh McKeen

5. A USFS grazing Allotment Management Plan NEPA has a no action alternative in it. Why doesn't the wolf reintroduction project have one? What are the criteria for quitting or stopping the project?
6. Were the economic and social impacts to local individuals considered?
7. Ranchers don't have the time to comment on NEPA or EIS process.
8. Allow for written comments from the public at AMWG meetings to be considered by AMOC. Incorporate comment cards.
9. Comment forms should also be on Web site. Establish periods for people to comment on a particular subject.
10. AMOC should consider or be involved in range management issues. Wolf issues should be considered in USFS Allotment Management Planning processes.
11. AMWG meetings should occur before AMOC meetings.
12. Information regarding Mexican wolf management or research should be presented at AMWG meetings.
13. Do not extrapolate from other projects into this one. Do the studies here first, before you undertake management actions.
14. Have specific topics for AMWG meetings.
15. Provide snacks for AMWG meetings on a rotating schedule.

Action Items:

Cathy Taylor (USFS) and Cynthia Dale (WMAT) will carry these suggestions forward to the AMOC work group that is developing recommendations for possible changes in AMWG meetings.

- f. Dates and locations for 2009 AMWG meetings

Questions and comments from the public:

1. The presence of Directors at AMWG meetings is important. Have the next AMWG meeting on April 29, 2009 so the Directors can interact with meeting attendees.

4. Other business

Questions and comments from the public:

1. What policies have AMOC adopted regarding the potential for psychological trauma to people as a result of wolves around private lands?
2. No significant discussions have taken place regarding the psychological impacts of nuisance wolves and wolves around residential areas.
3. Has AMOC enacted any policies to protect children? There is documented evidence regarding the Miller residence and habituated wolves causing problems. Habituated wolves are causing most of the problems and they need to be addressed.
4. People are hoping that AMOC will take action on this issue to address ongoing psychological trauma to children; bites are not required and impacts are ongoing. Some

wolves are flawed and endanger children. Wolf attacks on pets in front of children are akin to a homicide occurring before them.

5. Jess Carey's opinion should have a higher weight than other individuals. We should consider his opinion more. The opinion of Catron County should be given more weight in wolf management decisions.
6. There needs to be more sharing of data so more mutual respect can be developed.
7. Jess Carey has been assigned as a volunteer for Wildlife Services. He would like to have all the wolf channels so he can identify a wolf at any potential depredation incident. NMDGF is limiting his access to the channels. There appears to be prejudice against Jess Carey and Catron County.
8. The public believes you should be able to shoot wolves that are on your property.
9. The public depends on Wildlife Services support for the reintroduction project. Is Jess Carey a designated investigator for the project?
10. People don't want the effects of psychological trauma from wolves on their children.

Action Items:

Overall issue of psychological trauma from wolf encounters, etc. will be discussed at a future AMOC meeting.

5. Adjournment. Business having concluded, Matt Wunder adjourned the meeting at ca. 1930 and wished everyone a safe journey home.

Notes: (1) Information on the Mexican Wolf Blue Range Reintroduction Project is available on the Internet at <http://azgfd.gov/wolf> and <http://mexicanwolf.fws.gov>. (2) Notices for AMWG meetings and other news about issues pertaining to the Reintroduction Project are disseminated electronically through a self-subscription newsletter, the *Endangered Species Updates*. A self-subscription form is available at: <http://azgfd.gov/signup>. (3) Send email messages to the Reintroduction Project to: mexwolf@azgfd.gov; this is a passive account, so messages received will be read but individual responses will not be sent. (4) Send postal mail to: Mexican Wolf Reintroduction Project, 5000 West Carefree Highway, Phoenix, Arizona 85086.